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ABSTRACT

The Workplace Skills Enhancement Project was provided by the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council in Partnership with the Employment Opportunities Center and the Refugee Federation Service Center. Of the 150 participants in the program, 137 were Asian. Workplace literacy training was generally advertised as a voluntary program available to employees who were interested in developing their English skills. Supervisors of participants tended to note improvement in the areas of basic skills, interpersonal communication with co-workers and supervisors, willingness to ask questions and accept criticism, test-taking skills, and job-specific vocabulary. Gains in grammar, reading, and writing skills were not as great as in some of the other areas and were affected by the need for more than 40 hours of training. Of the 106 participants interviewed, all indicated that the training was beneficial. (The document includes external evaluation reports; curriculum outlines identifying competencies, indicators, benchmarks, and means of measurement; an employer or supervisor follow-up checklist; worksheets for grammar skills; and copies of newspaper articles about the program.) (CML)

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# WORKPLACE SKILLS ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

## FINAL REPORT

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| Project: | Workplace Skills Enhancement Project |
| Grantee: | Seattle-King County Private Industry Council (PIC)<br>Market Place One, Suite 250<br>2001 Western Avenue<br>Seattle, Washington 98121<br>(206) 684-7390 |
| Partner Agencies: | Employment Opportunities Center (EOC)<br>606 Maynard Avenue South<br>Seattle, Washington 98104<br>(206) 587-2828 |
| | Refugee Federation Service Center (RFSC)<br>2200 Rainier Avenue South<br>Seattle, Washington 98144<br>(206) 323-9365 |

## FINAL REPORT

1. **Compare actual accomplishments to objectives contained in the approved application.**

| | Plan | Actual |
|---|---|---|
| Recruitment | 200 | 230 |
| Enrollments | 150 | 150 |
| Completions | 120 | 122 |
| 30 Day Retention | 96 | 122* |
| 60 Day Retention | 84 | 114 |

* The grant specified participant follow up 30 days after training completion but did not reference a specific goal which was later established for the program.

2. **Schedule of accomplishments and target dates.**

| | Plan | Actual |
|---|---|---|
| Enrollments | | |
| Oct. - Dec. 1988 | 10 | 12 |
| Jan. - Mar. 1989 | 55 | 52 |
| Apr. - Jun. 1989 | 45 | 47 |
| Jul. - Sept 1989 | 40 | 18* |
| Oct.- Dec. 1989 | 0 | 21 |
| Total | 150 | 150 |

* No corrective action was taken regarding the variance from plan during quarter, July through September, in that the remaining enrollments had been scheduled for early October.

| Training Completions | Plan | Actual |
|---|---|---|
| Oct. - Dec. 1988 | 0 | 0 |
| Jan. - Mar. 1989 | 8 | 9 |
| Apr. - Jun. 1989 | 50 | 44 |
| Jul. - Sept 1989 | 30 | 47 |
| Oct.- Dec. 1989 | 32 | 16 |
| Jan.- Mar. 1990 | 0 | 6 |
| Total | 120 | 122 |

| 60 Day Retentions | Plan | Actual |
|---|---|---|
| Oct. - Dec. 1988 | 0 | 0 |
| Jan. - Mar. 1989 | 0 | 9 |
| Apr. - Jun. 1989 | 25 | 40 |
| Jul. - Sept 1989 | 20 | 45 |
| Oct. - Dec. 1989 | 39 | 7 |
| Jan. - Mar. 1990 | 0 | 13 |
| Total | 84 | 114* |

* Due to delays in the completion of the last class at Interpoint the 60 day retention period for some of the participants occurred after the end date of the grant and were not included in the report.

Other Objectives

Establishment of Advisory Committee

An advisory committee was implemented as proposed. First meeting occurred in November 1989. The committee met on a quarterly basis.

Upgrade Training

In the original proposal, it was indicated that a minimum of 10 participants would be enrolled for purposes of job upgrade. 28 participants were identified for upgrade, five of whom actually were upgraded/promoted as a result of the training.

3. **Participant characteristics**

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANT WHO WERE ENROLLED**

RESIDENCY

| | |
|---|---|
| King County | |
| Within Seattle | 61 |
| Outside Seattle | 43 |
| Outside King County | 46 (primarily Snohomish County) |

SEX

| | |
|---|---|
| Men | 38 |
| Women | 112 |

ETHNIC GROUP

| | |
|---|---|
| Asian | 137 |
| Vietnamese | 15 |
| Ethnic Chinese | 23 |
| Cambodian | 27 |
| Laotian | 25 |
| Korean | 26 |
| Filipino | 13 |
| Other Asian | 8 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 9 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Black | |
| African | 1 |
| White | |
| European/Soviet | 3 |

LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| 0 - 5 months | 40 |
| 6 - 11 months | 16 |
| 1 - 5 years | 60 |
| 6 - 10 years | 30 |
| 11 - 15 years | 4 |
| 16 - 20 years | 0 |

YEARS OF SCHOOL OR EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL

| Level A (Grades 0 - 8) | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 8 | 46 | 54 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hispanic | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| White | 0 | 1 | 1 |

| Level B (Grades 9 - 12) | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 27 | 56 | 83 |
| Black | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Hispanic | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| White | 0 | 2 | 2 |

AGE

| | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16 -24 | 2 | 11 | 13 |
| 25 - 44 | 29 | 74 | 103 |
| 45 - 59 | 5 | 25 | 30 |
| 60 and older | 2 | 2 | 4 |

## CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS WHO COMPLETED TRAINING

YEARS OF SCHOOL OR EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL

| Level A (Grades 0 - 8) | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 4 | 38 | 42 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hispanic | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| White | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Level B (Grades 9 - 12) | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 21 | 49 | 70 |
| Black | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Hispanic | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| White | 0 | 2 | 2 |

AGE

| | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16 -24 | 1 | 9 | 10 |
| 25 - 44 | 23 | 63 | 86 |
| 45 - 59 | 2 | 22 | 24 |
| 60 and older | 1 | 2 | 3 |

LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| 0 - 5 months | 30 |
| 6 - 11 months | 13 |
| 1 - 5 years | 51 |
| 6 - 10 years | 27 |
| 11 - 15 years | 2 |
| 16 - 20 years | 0 |

## CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS WHO DID NOT COMPLETE TRAINING

YEARS OF SCHOOL OR EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL

| Level A (Grades 0 - 8) | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 4 | 8 | 12 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hispanic | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| White | 0 | 1 | 1 |

| Level B (Grades 9 - 12) | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 6 | 7 | 13 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hispanic | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| White | 0 | 0 | 0 |

AGE

| | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16 -24 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 25 - 44 | 6 | 11 | 17 |
| 45 - 59 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| 60 and older | 1 | 0 | 1 |

LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| 0 - 5 months | 10 |
| 6 - 11 months | 3 |
| 1 - 5 years | 9 |
| 6 - 10 years | 3 |
| 11 - 15 years | 2 |
| 16 - 20 years | 0 |

27 of the 150 enrolled were reported as not having completed training. Of the 27, four dropped out within the first few weeks of class and two quit to take better jobs. The majority of participants were reported as non completions because they failed to meet the established definition of training completion.

Participants were required to attend 85% of the scheduled hours of training, of which approximately half to two thirds of the non completors failed to meet. This occurred more frequently for participants such as hotel employees who worked non standard work weeks with shifts that also varied making class attendance more difficult. Attendance was also affected by other factors such as overtime. It may be noted that the evaluator also looked at attendance factors and, as indicated in the final report, the reasons for attendance varied considerably by partner and their corresponding worksites.

In addition to attendance requirements, there were other outcome measures, one of which was to receive a satisfactory evaluation following training completion. Several participants although having attended the required hours did not receive a satisfactory evaluation in all areas. Contributing factors were the length of training, degree of proficiency and/or the varying expectations of the supervisor.

Statistics indicate that 40.7% of the non completions were men although they represented only 25.3% of the total served. 27 of the 38 men in the program met the definition of completion.

**4. Dissemination Activities**

- Information on developing and contracting workplace literacy training was provided to State of Washington, Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Refugee Assistance staff.

- Meeting with Keith Koeppe of Washington State Department of Employment Security to share information on workplace literacy, i.e., implementation, what works, problems, etc.

- Part of an issue of Topics, a Private Industry Council publication, was devoted to workplace literacy The focus of the article was to promote and disseminate information on workplace literacy training made available through Department of Education funding. (Exhibit B)

- o Contact was made with the media who did several stories on the Workplace Literacy Program funded by the Department of Education. (Exhibit B)

- o Presentation on workplace literacy to local officials.

- o Dissemination of Final Report and products developed as a result of the program.

**5. Evaluation Activities**

Laurie Armstrong of Business, Government and Community Connections was hired to conduct an evaluation of our workplace literacy program. As described in our evaluation plan, the evaluation process began while training was in progress to provide feedback and recommendations for improvement on an on-going basis. Copies of the final evaluation reports are included in Section 3.

Interim evaluation reports lead to the development of specific competencies for use by the program and more involvement of supervisors in the identification of such competencies. The evaluator also developed competency statements, indicators and benchmarks and corresponding supervisor evaluation sheets for use by the program. They are included as Exhibit A.

**6. Key Personnel Changes**

One instructor left after completion of 90% of the training. She left to provide workplace literacy training as a private consultant to one of the companies where she taught under the grant. At this time, all of the training slots had been committed. The company who felt the need to continue workplace literacy training was apparently willing to pay for the training.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The project did not have any difficulty identifying employers with the need for Workplace Literacy Training. Prior to the grant submittal, partner agencies (the Employment Opportunities Center and Refugee Federation Service Center) had been approached by several employers requesting language/literacy training for their limited English speaking employees. After the announcement of the grant award and initial implementation of the program, other employers including two major electronic firms approached the PIC and its partner agencies expressing interest in the development of workplace literacy training at their respective sites. Participating employers were also instrumental in marketing program services to other employers.

Company management was supportive and participated in the development of the program, with the degree of involvement varying by employer. Personnel managers and/or individuals assigned to staff development and training generally served in a liaison capacity between the employer and the project after program implementation. The initial implementation and development generally entailed a series of meetings with management and supervisory staff of various levels.

Supervisors were asked to provide information on participant performance/progress as a means to measure pre and post training gains and to obtain feedback on the training. Occasionally, it was difficult to get certain supervisors to provide necessary input or feedback on the training. There were others who were very supportive of the training and helped to reinforced the things that were taught in class.

The degree to which lower line supervisors participated in the development and provision of training varied. Both EOC and Refugee Federation each worked with one company, the Stouffer Madison Hotel and King County Medical Blue Shield, respectively, where access to staff other than the personnel or training representative was limited. These experiences reinforced the initial concept of involving all levels of company management in the development of the project.

Employees at the companies where WPL was offered were receptive to the program. Workplace literacy training was generally advertised as a voluntary program available to employees who were interested in developing their English skills. Employees were not singled out for participation although in a few instances were strongly encouraged to participate by their supervisors. The project was careful not to stigmatize employees as "at risk" or poor workers due difficulties in English communication or comprehension.

The original objective of prioritizing services to employees with specific needs was done once applicants were tested and assessed and the selection process was finalized.

The assessment process included testing to determine English proficiency level and an employer evaluation of specific areas of oral/written communication and other skills with respect to the job held. Most of the participants were tested using the Washington State Adult Refugee Project ESL Placement Test which was developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Pre and post testing to measure language gains was not done in that available tests did not always cover the same materials/elements as the training.

Training included variations of the curriculum provided in the proposal. The method of instruction varied by site as result of specific employer/employee needs, the availability of volunteers and instructional assistants and the style of instructor. Training was an average of 40 hours in duration.

WPL training conducted by EOC tended to include more supervisor involvement in the classroom. Feedback through the evaluation process indicated that there were pros and cons regarding the use of supervisors in the training. In some cases, the involvement of the supervisors in the training proved to be a positive learning experience for them. Supervisors learned about cultural differences as they related to interpersonal relationships and their job. They also saw during mock exercises that oral instructions they were giving to workers were not clear or explicit as participants learned to clarify instructions. A few supervisors continued the learning process outside of the classroom by working with participants on expanding vocabulary, etc.

WESTIN HOTEL

The Westin Hotel was the first employer site to begin workplace literacy training and continued to have classes throughout the duration of the project. The Westin has been a model site in terms of employer support and involvement. Most of the initial publicity about our workplace literacy program centered from the enthusiasm of hotel management and the resulting success of the training. There were several newspaper articles that appeared locally and nationally about the start of workplace literacy training at the Westin. Copies are included as attachments. The partner involved with the Westin was the Employment Opportunities Center.

The development of workplace literacy training at the Westin involved the personnel director, various supervisory staff and support of hotel management which led in part to the success of the program at this site. Occasionally supervisors participated in the classroom

Most of the classes held at the Westin Hotel were segregated by job functions rather than by language level.

Unanticipated Problems

Because of varying work schedules including different shifts, coordination of classes was often difficult. Being the first site, there were some problems that were not anticipated with respect to attendance. The class had been scheduled during the slow season to avoid conflict with work schedules. Some of the participants had extended vacations abroad scheduled which affected participation in class. At least one individual had a second job which also limited his availability for class.

Resolution

To address problems and to prevent them from occurring:

- o better screening of availability so that enrollment would not conflict with planned vacations of an extended nature.
- o making use of available support service funds to pay for transportation to class on days off.
- o Extension of class end date to compensate for days missed due to vacation, days off, etc.

Although it was not offered as an incentive, it turned out that those who came to class on their days off were often given additional work.

ZEALANDIA

The second site to receive Workplace Literacy Training was Zealandia, a manufacturing firm. This was the first site for the Refugee Federation Service Center. In contrast to the Westin, Zealandia:

- o had employees who performed similar job functions.
- o did not pay release time.

- did not experience the same problems with attendance as the Westin. All of the employees worked the same shift and had a standard work week.
- classes were grouped by language proficiency level.

Midway through the training, there were a few participants who quit to accept other employment. Although they did not complete the training, it was felt that the training had given these participants additional skills and necessary confidence to apply for higher paying jobs at other companies.

There were also two employees from a neighboring company who attended classes at Zealandia.

STOUFFER MADISON HOTEL

Following the implementation of classes at the Westin and at Zealandia, a class was also started at the Madison Hotel. The partner agency involved was EOC. Because of personnel changes within the Madison, the individual who originally served as the training coordinator was reassigned leaving a void in terms of someone at the Madison actively promoting workplace literacy within the hotel. As a result, there were only two individuals identified for WPL training. From correspondence from the company it appeared that the individuals helped to promote the concept of workplace literacy. The EOC staff quickly realized that they needed to require a stronger commitment from the employer from other supervisors and management for future classes.

SUNDOG

The class at the Madison was followed by a class at Sundog, a company which manufactures nylon sports bags. This training was also done by EOC. As they were the only employer that did not have space on site to conduct training, the public library next door was used to conduct training. During the training period, the company was undergoing changes from salary to piece work, the explanation of which was also covered in the training.

INTERPOINT

Within two weeks, EOC also begin providing workplace literacy training at Interpoint, an electronics firm. The majority of the participants worked in the area of electronic assembly. The training covered such things as reading procedures, certification testing, vocabulary, pronunciation, and communication skills.

This class had 19 participants and was much larger than previous classes. Two bilingual supervisors also participated in the class providing technical and other assistance to the instructor.

The second class which began in early October was much smaller than the first class. In this class company benefits was added as one of the topics. Four participants returned to audit the second class. The instructor noted improvements in both confidence level and communication skills of the returning students.

FURTHER CONTACT WITH THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY

Just prior to the implementation of training at Interpoint, the PIC was contacted by representatives from the electronics industry indicating their need for workplace literacy training. The electronics industries faced problems in two areas:

1. The inability of many skilled workers to pass government required certification tests.
2. Addressing changes in the workplace which now required more on the job application of reading and writing skills to accomplish job functions.

This resulted in the involvement of Korry Electronics and Eldec in our workplace literacy training project.

KORRY ELECTRONICS

Training at Korry which was provided by the Employment Opportunities Center. In preparation for the training at Korry, the instructor spent a week of training at Advanced Technology Training Center to gain some basic knowledge of electronic jobs.

The class had heavy supervisor involvement including their participation in the class room. Supervisors shared information to the class on problems they encountered on the job. Such things included reading of inventory sheets, addressing errors and back orders, completion of employee evaluation forms and problem solving, etc. Supervisors were scheduled for eight out of 20 scheduled sessions.

ELDEC

The Refugee Federation Service Center was the partner agency involved in the development and delivery of training at Eldec.
Three sessions were held at Eldec. The first two sessions were run concurrently with one Intermediate and one Preliterate/Beginning level class. Eldec had two plants within the same vicinity, each having one of the two classes.

The Preliterate/Beginning level class received an additional 40 hours of training paid by Eldec. Despite concerns, the extended hours did not appear to affect attendance. There were other factors, however, which seemed to impact participation. Many of the participations were also scheduled for overtime during the course of the training which meant longer work days. It appeared that there was a higher rate of non participation from those who had to travel to a second site for the training and return to their work site for overtime. In response, a couple of participants who were borderline were moved to the other class. A request was also made to supervisors to release participants a few minutes earlier to compensate for travel time but it was not granted.

Instruction focussed on three areas writing, communications skills and Eldec specific terminology. The training also was intended to provide participants with needed skills to pass company certification tests. It may be noted that while the need to have employees pass certification tests was one of the main reasons for becoming involved in workplace literacy, the emphasis of the training shifted as supervisor gave input and more of their needs were incorporated into the training design.

KING COUNTY MEDICAL BLUE SHIELD

King County Medical Blue Shield was the last of the three sites where workplace literacy training was offered by the Refugee Federation Service Center. Although fluency levels of employees at this site were generally higher than those at other sites, the employer felt the need for training, particularly in the area of written skills. The focus was modified as participants indicated their interest working on speaking skills. As previously indicated, there was little opportunity for Refugee Federation staff to interface with supervisors as all contact was handled through the personnel representative. As a result, training focussed less on reading and writing skills needed for specific job skills. At the last advisory committee meeting, the Blue Shield acknowledged the need for more supervisory involvement in the training.

OUTCOMES

In addition to achieving the program objectives described earlier in this report, the project success can be measured through feedback from participating employers and participants.

Supervisor comments were received in two ways, through face to face interviews with the project evaluator and through the completion of pre and post evaluation forms requested by project staff. The areas where supervisors tended to note improvement were in the areas of basic skills, interpersonal communication skills with co-workers and supervisors, willingness to ask questions and

accept criticism, test taking skills, job specific vocabulary. Gains in grammar, reading and writing skills were not as great as some of the other areas and may be affected by the need for more extensive training (longer than the forty hours funded through this grant).

The evaluator conducted interviews with participants to obtain their assessment of the training. All of the participants interviewed indicated that the training was beneficial to them.

| | A Great Deal | Some | A Little | Not at All |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Has this training helped you to do the work required in your job? | 64 (60%) | 22 (21%) | 20 (19%) | 0 |
| Has this training helped you to feel more confident in your job? | 50 (47%) | 29 (27%) | 27 (26%) | 0 |
| Do you think this training will improve your ability to be promoted or to get a better job in the future? | 52 (49%) | 28 (26%) | 26 (25%) | 0 |

Although slightly more than half of the participants who were interviewed indicated that their confidence level increased only "some" or " a little," this was one area where both supervisors and instructors seemed to see big changes.

It was also felt that increased confidence also resulted in a few participants from Zealandia moving on to other jobs. Because they changed jobs prior to the end of training, they are reflected statistically as positive outcomes.

The hiring of one of our instructors by Korry Electronics to continue workplace literacy training with company funds the near the end of the project was also a strong indicator of the project's success although a loss for the program.

## SUMMARY OF TRAINING BY PROJECT SITE

### Refugee Federation Service Center

### ZEALANDIA

Total Served

22 participants (5 men and 17 women) were enrolled. Included are two participants employed at a neighboring company, Sea Bell.

Number of Classes

Two classes were held. Both classes started in January 1989 but were held on alternating days. Participants were assigned to classes by language level.

Class size

There were approximately 10 - 12 participants in each class.

Proficiency Level

English proficiency levels ranged from Preliterate to Beginning Level. Participant English proficiency levels were determined by using the Washington State Adult Refugee Project ESL Placement Test developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Release Time

None provided. This was the only site that did not provide paid release time. The lack of release time, however, did not appear to have any significant bearing on attendance. Classes were held immediately after work.

It may be noted that the request for workplace literacy was company generated even prior to the availability of project funds. Access to free ESL classes is limited due to location of schools and the lack of sufficient non commuter public transportation in East King County where many of the Zealandia employees reside.

Training Focus

The training focused on:

- Oral communication skills development (e.g., communicating problems or situations that are encountered on the job to both company management and with co-workers.)

- Understanding and using company benefit package.

Instructor

Kent Young

Bilingual staff were also involved in the explanation of company benefits to preliterate level participants.

**ELDEC**

Total Served

40 participants (5 men and 35 women) were enrolled.

Number of Classes

A total of three classes were held at Eidec. Two classes one Preliterate/Beginning level and one Intermediate level class, began in June 1989 and ran concurrently (on alternating days). A second Intermediate level class began at the end of September 1989.

Although workplace literacy funded classes were generally 40 hours in duration, the Preliterate/Beginning level class was 80 hours with the additional hours of instruction paid by the employer.

Class size

Class size ranged from approximately 11 to 17 participants. For the beginning level class which had 17 students, there was a bilingual instructional assistant and a volunteer, both of assisted the instructor in the classroom.

Proficiency Level

English ability of participants ranged from preliterate to intermediate Level using the SPI developed Adult Refugee Project ESL Placement Test.

Release Time

For every two hours of classroom instruction, one hour of paid release time was provided.

Training Focus

The training was developed to address three areas, communication skills, technical and Eldec specific vocabulary and writing. Training also prepared participants to pass company specific certification tests.

Instructor

Kent Young

As indicated above, a bilingual instructional assistant and a volunteer were also utilized.

**KING COUNTY MEDICAL BLUE SHIELD**

Total Served

13 Participants (2 men and 11 women)

Number of Classes

One class which began in October 1989 was held.

Class Size

Because two participants dropped during the first three weeks, the class size was generally no more than 11.

Proficiency Level

English proficiency ranged from Beginning to Advanced Level based on the SPI Adult Refugee Project Placement test.

It may be noted that there were a number of potential enrollees identified by the company who the instructors felt were not limited in their ability to communicate in English although they were foreign born.

Release Time

Paid release time was provided for half of the class hours attended.

Training Focus

The training addressed writing and speaking skills including pronunciation.

Instructors

Jeanne Morel and Martin Platt

**Employment Opportunities Center**

**WESTIN HOTEL**

Total Served

28 participants (14 men and 14 women)

Number of Classes

A total of four classes were held at the Westin Hotel.

Classes, due to work schedules and differences in job functions, were generally grouped by occupational area. Of the first two classes which began in December 1988, one was a class of two housekeepers, both who spoke minimal English and the other consisted of primarily housemen and stewards The range of English abilities varied among the latter group. The third class which began in April was the least homogeneous as it had employees from housekeeping, laundry and the Market Cafe. The fourth class which began in mid July consisted primarily of Spanish speaking housekeepers.

Class Size

Class size ranged from two to ten participants. Individual tutoring was also provided to one upgrade participant.

Proficiency Level

Participants ranged from Preliterate to Intermediate in terms of English proficiency level.

Release Time

One hour out of every two hours was given as release time. Despite the availability of paid release time, attendance for some participants was sporadic, particularly for the first group of participants due to vacations and work schedules. Due to non standard work weeks, participants tended not to attend on their days off.

Training Focus

Training included the following: learning workplace procedure, clarifying and following instructions, understanding personnel policies and company benefits, practicing oral communication skills including being understood on the telephone and learning job related vocabulary.

Instructor

Estrella Chan, Ann Dwyer

**KORRY ELECTRONICS**

Total Served

10 participants (2 men and 8 women)

Number of Classes

One session, running from June 19 through August 28, 1989.

Class Size

There were 10 participants.

Proficiency Level

Participants ranged from Beginning 2 Level to Intermediate level in language ability.

Release time

One hour out one and a half hours of class time was provided as release time.

Training Focus

The training covered such things as understanding job specific vocabulary, reading and writing procedures, oral communication skills, responding to and completing employee portions of employee evaluation forms.

Instructor

Estrella Chan

**INTERPOINT**

Total Served

27 participants (10 men and 17 women) including one participant who was employed by Aetna Services, the company providing janitorial services at Interpoint

Number of Classes

Two sessions were held at Interpoint, one which started on March 9, 1989, and the second which began on October 10, 1989.

Class Size

The first class had 19 participants. Bilingual supervisors assisted in the instructional process. The second class had eight participants plus four former participants who audited the class.

Proficiency Level

At Interpoint, the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Listening test (Level 3) was used to determine language level. Participants scores ranged from 204 to 226 plus. The higher scoring participants when retested on the regular CASAS appraisal test scored much lower.

Training Focus

The training focused on reading company specific procedures, vocabulary, internal certification requirements, performance evaluations and for the second class, the inclusion of company benefits.

Instructor

Estrella Chan taught the first class; Ann Dwyer was instructor for the second class.

**SUNDOG**

Total Served

8 participants (1 man and 7 women)

Number of Classes

One class which began on February 22, 1989, was held.

Class Size

Eight participants were enrolled.

Proficiency Level

Participants ranged from Beginning Level 1 to Intermediate on the SPI Adult Refugee ESL Placement Test.

Training Focus

Training included basic math (measuring, fractions, etc.), job specific general vocabulary, and understanding benefit package and the piece work system to which the company was in process of converting.

Instructor

Estrella Chan

**STOUFFER MADISON HOTEL**

Total Served

Two participants ( 2 women) were enrolled.

Number of Classes

There was only one class which begin on January 31, 1989.

Class Size

Two participants enrolled.

Proficiency Level

Intermediate and Advanced levels

Training Focus

During the training, participants learned on the job vocabulary, entering and reading computerized inventory documents, self expression and test taking skills.

Instructor

Ann Dwyer and Estrella Chan

# Evaluation of the Employment Opportunities Center Workplace Literacy Program

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## March 30, 1990

*Prepared by*
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# *Introduction*

The Final Evaluation of the Employment Opportunities Center Workplace Literacy Programs focuses on:

- Employee assessment training outcomes, e.g. productivity, efficiency, quality, communication, safety, socialization, attitude, work barriers, goal achievement and basic skill goal achievement
- Review of supervisor's comments in WPL Employee Files regarding Employee Progress (Achievement of Training Competencies)
- Employee Assessment of Training Quality
- Factors affecting employee attendance at the WPL class
- Other issues
- Relationships between Labor Force Composition and WPL Employee Training Requests
- Was the WPL Project a success?

# *WPL Employee Training Outcomes*

*(Summary of interviews with 44 EOC Employees from Westin, Sundog, Korry Electronics and Interpoint)*

What have you learned in the WPL classes:

| Response Area | Number of Responses |
|---|---|
| To learn how to request documents | 29 |
| To ask more questions/clarify instructions | 28 |
| To become more verbal (outspoken) at work | 27 |
| To understand work policies | 24 |
| To understand safety regulations | 22 |
| To speak more clearly with better pronunciation | 21 |
| To express myself more comfortably | 19 |
| To become more aware of affect on others at work (by speaking in native language instead of English) | 16 |
| To become more familiar with workplace socialization/courtesy | 12 |
| To use more complex sentences | 11 |
| To improve grammar skills | 11 |
| To avoid saying, "I don't know" repeatedly in sentences or "I don't speak English." | 5 |
| To write English better | 5 |

# *WPL Employee Progress*

*(Supervisor Ratings)*

A review of pre and post training supervisor ratings and comments in 53 WPL employee files indicates that employees made the *most* progress in the following training competency areas:

- Knowledge of health benefits
- Knowledge of workplace terminology
- Interpersonal communication with co-workers
- Increase in understanding of importance of asking questions/ clarifying instructions
- Increase in ability to follow directions

Employees made relatively less progress in the following areas:

- Knowledge of reading comprehension
- Knowledge of grammar

# Employee Assessment of Training Quality

*(Based on Interviews with 44 EOC Employees)*

| | *A Great Deal* | *Some* | *A Little* | *Not at All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Has this training helped you to do the work required in your job? | 27 | 9 | 8 | |
| 2. Has this training helped you to feel more confident in your job? | 20 | 14 | 10 | |
| 3. Do you think this training will improve your ability to be promoted or to get a better job in the future? | 19 | 15 | 10 | |

# *Factors Effecting EOC Employee Attendance in WPL Training*

Overall, employee attendance in WPL training was good.

Employees with the ***highest*** WPL training attendance were:

- Employees who had worked at the company for more than 6 months.
- Employees who were taking the WPL class for the second time.
- Employees who lived closer to the company site.

Employers with the ***lowest*** WPL training attendance were:

- Employees who had worked at the company for less than 6 months.

Most absences were due to employee holidays/vacation time.

## Other Issues – Further Review is Needed

### *Why were more women than men referred to the WPL training by supervisors?*

Approximately 3 times more women than men attended the WPL training. Although the workforce is comprised of more women than men in most of the occupational areas filled by WPL employees, the WPL class was somewhat disproportionately comprised of women. To some degree this may be because (1) female employees had stayed at home while their spouses went to school to study ESL, and as a result had lower English skills when they entered the labor market, (2) female employees were referred more frequently to the training by employers because of either their lower abilities • greater interest in seeking WPL training • or because their employers perceived that they needed the training more than their male counterparts.

Regardless of the possible responses to the above question most women felt that they needed the training. Men tended to be more likely to report that the training was not necessary because they felt that their language skills were sufficient. A few employees (approximately 3%) felt that they were referred for training because of their ethnicity and accent – not because of their language or work skill level.

### *How helpful was the WPL training for employee supervisors and managers?*

A review of participant files indicates that supervisors felt that employees improved their skills (according to a set of agreed upon training competencies) between the supervisor and the WPL instructor and employees. As a result most supervisors were helped – because they had a better trained, more productive workforce.

Other potential benefits of the WPL training to supervisors are harder to measure. The WPL training tended to:

- Increase supervisor awareness of the barriers faced by WPL employees.
- Increase supervisor awareness of how they could communicate company policies, rules and work requests more effectively and efficiently to limited English speaking employees.
- Increase supervisor awareness of and appreciation for cross cultural differences in the company's labor force.

## *Relationship Between Labor Force Composition and WPL Employee Training Requests*

This evaluation did not conduct an indepth analysis of the relationship between labor force composition (employee demographics) and WPL employee training requests.

A brief review and comparison of PIC participant MIS data, and participant interviews, indicates that:

- "Newer" employees (persons who were more recent arrivals to the U.S.) tended to request English language skill training, workplace terminology instruction and general policy (health benefits) training.
- Employees who had worked for longer periods of time (more than 2 years) tended to request written communication and grammar skills training.
- Employees who were primary wage earners in the family tended to request more information about health benefits, raises, promotions.
- Employees who earned $6.50 an hour or more, regardless of occupation, were much more interested in grammar and written communication exercises. Employees earning less than $6.50 an hour requested training in oral communication skills.
- Older employees (40 and over) tended to request reading exercises, (and were less interested in classroom drills or games).
- Participants with lower literacy tests (Preliterate Level 1-2-3) were much more likely than participants with higher literacy test scores to request "situational" training, e.g. help dealing with impatient employers, unfriendly co-workers, etc.

# *Was the WPL Project a Success?*

**Expectation of Wage Gain**

- One of the goals of the WPL training was to improve the WPL employees' wages and wage earning potential. In most cases the actual wages earned during the course of the project remained the same. (Most employee wages were subject to standard pay scale raise structures and schedules. At follow-up 13% of the participants' wages were higher. Participant records were somewhat unclear as to the source of the wage increase. Future WPL programs should specify the follow-up wage and indicate the reason for wage change (if applicable), e.g. • a promotion • scheduled raise • bonus • change in pay scale, etc. • different job, etc.

**Overall Service Delivery**

- Overall, the WPL services were successful. Services included:
  - ▲ Marketing service to generate employer interest and involvement in WPL training.
  - ▲ Assessment and enrollment of WPL employees.
  - ▲ WPL training curriculum development and implementation
  - ▲ WPL training service delivery.
  - ▲ Follow-up of employees (to verify post WPL training employment status and wages earned).

In some cases, supervisor involvement did not play an integral role in program planning, or operations and follow-up. Future WPL programs need to set more clear parameters for supervisor involvement in every component of the program.

**Need for More Training**

42% of EOC employees wanted to take a second WPL class. 71% of the employees said they would not access similar services if they were not available at the company site.

# Evaluation of the Refugee Federation Workplace Literacy Program for The Seattle King County Private Industry Council

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The Final Evaluation of the Refugee Federation Workplace Literacy Programs focuses on:

- Employee assessment training outcomes, e.g. productivity, efficiency, quality, communication, safety, socialization, attitude, work barriers, goal achievement and basic skill goal achievement
- Review of supervisor's comments in WPL Employee Files regarding Employee Progress (Achievement of Training Competencies)
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- Factors affecting employee attendance at the WPL class
- Other issues
- Relationships between Labor Force Composition and WPL Employee Training Requests
- Was the WPL Project a success?

# *WPL Employee Assessment Training Outcomes*

*(Summary of Interviews with 42 Refugee Federation Employees)*

What have you learned in the WPL class?

Employees in Refugee Federation WPL classes reported that the WPL training helped them to do the following:

| Response Area | Number of Responses |
|---|---|
| To learn workplace terminology | 35 |
| To improve grammar skills | 29 |
| To improve test taking skills | 27 |
| To improve social/communication skills | 25 |
| To improve knowledge of health benefits | 24 |
| To improve writing skills | 23 |
| To improve reading comprehension skills | 21 |
| To identify independent study needs | 12 |
| To ask for additional work/promotion | 7 |
| To start to take "chances" at work (e.g. make suggestions, write notes, answer the phone) | 5 |
| To develop plans for attending night school | 4 |

# *WPL Employee Progress*

*(Supervisor Ratings)*

A review of pre and post training supervisor ratings and comments in 62 Refugee Federation employee files indicates that employees made the *most* progress in the following training competency areas:

- Knowledge of work related terminology
- Verbal communication skills
- Test taking
- Confidence
- Efforts to clarify instructions/ask questions

Employees made relatively less progress in the following areas:

- Grammar skills
- Knowledge of written materials, e.g. how to read (interpret work orders)
- Writing skills

## *Employee Assessment of Training Quality*

*(Based on Interviews with 62 Refugee Federation Employees)*

| | *A Great Deal* | *Some* | *A Little* | *Not at All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Has this training helped you to do the work required in your job? | 37 | 13 | 12 | |
| 2. Has this training helped you to feel more confident in your job? | 30 | 15 | 17 | |
| 3. Do you think that this training will improve your ability to be promoted or to get a better job in the future? | 33 | 13 | 16 | |

## *Factors Affecting Refugee Federation Employee Attendance in WPL Training*

Overall, employee attendance in WPL training was very good.

Employees with the *highest* WPL training attendance were:

- Single people or people with small families (3 or less).
- Employees who were referred by their supervisor to the class.
- Employees who were taking the WPL class for the second time.

Employees with *lower* attendance rates were:

- Employees who had worked more than 6 months with the company.
- Employees who lived in larger families (4 or more).
- Self referred employees.
- Employees who worked more than 40 hours a week.

# Other Issues – Further Review is Needed

### *Why were more women than men referred to the WPL training by supervisors?*

Approximately 3 times more women than men attended the WPL training. Although the workforce is comprised of more women than men in most of the occupational areas filled by WPL employees, the WPL class was somewhat disproportionately comprised of women. To some degree this may be because (1) female employees had stayed at home while their spouses went to school to study ESL, and as a result had lower English skills when they entered the labor market, (2) female employees were referred more frequently to the training by employers because of either their lower abilities • greater interest in seeking WPL training • or because their employers perceived that they needed the training more than their male counterparts.

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- Increase supervisor awareness of the barriers faced by WPL employees.
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## *Was the WPL Project a Success?*

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### Overall Service Delivery

- Overall, the WPL services were successful. Services included:
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  - ▲ Follow-up of employees (to verify post WPL training employment status and wages earned).

In some cases, supervisor involvement did not play an integral role in program planning, or operations and follow-up. Future WPL programs need to set more clear parameters for supervisor involvement in every component of the program.

### Need for More Training

49% of Refugee Federation employees wanted to take a second WPL class. 75% of the employees said they would not access similar services if they were not available at the company site.

EXHIBIT A

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 SKILL DOMAIN: HEALTH BENEFIT INSURANCE/ SICK LEAVE PRACTICES | | | |
| 1.1 The employee will demonstrate an increased knowledge of company health benefit insurance/ sick leave practices. | The employee will have a knowledge of company health benefit/sick leave practices. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employee will demonstrate and feel confident that he/she understands health benefit packages. | Classroom observation<br>Instructor observation<br>Employee rating |
| 1.2 The employee will demonstrate a thorough knowledge of procedures to follow to report absences, arrange/request leave time for doctor appointments, sick leave, etc. | The employee will demonstrate an ability to follow correct procedures to report absences and sick leave. | Given an opportunity to participate in role playing exercises in class, the employee will demonstrate correct application of absence/ sick leave procedures. | Classroom observation<br>Role playing<br>Employee rating |
| 1.3 The employee will demonstrate a knowledge of how to complete health insurance forms. | The employee will demonstrate an ability to successfully complete health insurance forms. | Given an opportunity to complete health insurance forms in class, employees will complete forms accurately. | Written assessment |
| 1.4 The employee will demonstrate a knowledge of health benefits terminology, e.g.,<br>- Benefit package<br>- Fringe benefits<br>- Medical plan<br>- Dental plan<br>- Pension plan<br>- Profit sharing<br>- Promotion<br>- Renumeration<br>- Rewards<br>- Bonus<br>- Benefits commensurate with experience | The employee will define health benefit terminology accurately. | Given 10-15 opportunities requiring the matching of words with correct definitions, employees will demonstrate an 80 percent or better accuracy rate. | Written assessment |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.0 SKILL DOMAIN: COMPANY WORK PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS | | | |
| 2.1 The employee will demonstrate a knowledge of company work performance expectations, e.g.,<br>- Call in to work if you will be late or sick<br>- Do not take extended breaks<br>- Ask questions if you do not understand<br>- Work safely, quickly, accurately, consistently<br>- Be friendly with your coworkers and supervisors<br>- Do not spread rumors<br>- Complete work on time<br>- Do not make personal telephone calls<br>- Try not to make doctor/dentist appointments during work hours<br>- If your work is done, do not stand around--ask someone if there is more work to be done<br>- If you have an idea about how to complete your job, share your idea | The employee will demonstrate an ability to verbally identify company work performance expectations. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, employees will verbally identify at least five company work performance expectations. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation<br>Employee rating |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3.0 SKILL DOMAIN: KNOWLEDGE OF AND ACCESS TO COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES | | | |
| 3.1 The employee will have a knowledge of available ESL/ABE classes located in community colleges, etc. | The employee will know where ESL/ABE classes are offered in the community. | Given a list of available ESL/ABE classes, the employee will identify potential class(es) located most conveniently to his/her home/work site. | Verbal assessment |
| 3.2 The employee will have the skills to complete the application/paperwork to enroll in ESL/ABE classes. | The employee will demonstrate the ability to successfully complete ESL/ABE applicant application/paperwork. | Given a formal ESL/ABE application, the employee will successfully complete all required paperwork. | Written assessment |
| 3.3 The employee will successfully enroll in an ESL/ABE class and attend the class. | The employee will enroll in and attend an ESL/ABE class. | Given an opportunity to enroll in an ESL/ABE class, the employee will successfully enroll and attend class for a minimum of one month. | Instructor follow-up |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.0 SKILL DOMAIN: TEST TAKING ABILITY | | | |
| 4.1 The employee will understand the need to develop test taking skills. | The employee will verbally discuss reasons for developing test taking skills in his/her job. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employee will verbally identify three or more reasons for developing test taking skills. | Classroom participation Instructor observation |
| 4.2 The employee will demonstrate less anxiety about taking tests. | The employee will demonstrate during test taking less anxiety about taking tests. | Given an opportunity to take practice tests in class, the employee will demonstrate more confidence and ease in taking tests. | Written assessment |
| 4.3 The employee will demonstrate an ability to successfully complete and pass tests within set timeframes. | The employee will complete and pass tests successfully within set time frames. | Given an opportunity to take required (practice) tests in class, the employee will successfully complete and pass tests. | Written assessment |
| 4.4 The employee will demonstrate an awareness of future areas in which he/she needs to be tested. | The employee will identify future tests he/she will need to successfully pass as a requirement of continued employment or as a requirement of potential promotion. | Given a request to identify potential testing areas, the employee will identify all required tests to be taken within the next six months. | Classroom participation Instructor observation |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5.0 SKILL DOMAIN: CLARIFY INSTRUCTIONS/COMMUNICATION | | | |
| 5.1 The employee will understand the importance of clarifying instructions. | The employee will discuss reasons for clarifying instructions. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employee will identify verbally three or more reasons for clarifying instructions. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation |
| 5.2 The employee will demonstrate the ability to paraphrase directions from the supervisor. | The employee will paraphrase supervisor directors correctly. | Given a set of situations specifying employer directions, the employee will successfully paraphrase directions during a minimum of three role-playing exercises. | Classroom role-playing exercises<br>Instructor observation |
| 5.3 The employee will develop the skills to communicate verbally with coworkers and supervisors (and customers if applicable). | The employee will demonstrate an ability to verbally communicate with coworkers and supervisors during mock role playing exercises. | Given a set of job specific role playing situations (identified by employees), the employee will communicate verbally, demonstrating proficiency in a minimum of three role playing situations. | Classroom role-playing exercises<br>Instructor observation |
| 5.4 The employee will assess his/her need and ability to communicate accurately both verbally and nonverbally. | The employee will assess his/her communication skills. | Given an opportunity to assess his/her communication skills, the employee will verbally identify three strengths and three weaknesses of his/her communication skills. | Verbal assessment<br>Instructor observation |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5.0 SKILL DOMAIN: CLARIFY INSTRUCTIONS/COMMUNICATION (continued) | | | |
| 5.5 The employee will develop realistic expectations regarding his/her ability to communicate and his/her career advancement potential. | The employee will realistically identify the effect of his/her communication skills on his/her career advancement potential. | Given an opportunity to consider his/her career goals, the employee will identify, verbally and in writing, how his/her communication skills may need to improve before he/she will be considered for promotion. | Classroom participation<br>Written assessment<br>Employee Rating |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6.0 SKILL DOMAIN: GENERAL WORKPLACE TERMINOLOGY | | | |
| 6.1 The employee will demonstrate a knowledge of general workplace terminology, e.g.,<br>- Assemble/assembly<br>- Communicate/ communication<br>- Fabricate/ fabrication<br>- Manufacture/ manufacturing<br>- Operate/operation<br>- Permanent<br>- Temporary<br>- Shift work<br>- Split shift<br>- Graveyard shift<br>- Rotating shift<br>- Part time<br>- Piecework<br>- Produce/production<br>- Receive/receiving | The employee will correctly define a selection of general workplace vocabulary. | Given 10-15 opportunities requiring the matching of words with correct definitions, employees will demonstrate 80% or better accuracy. | Written assessment |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7.0 SKILL DOMAIN: UPGRADE TERMINOLOGY | | | |
| 7.1 Employees who are interested in being promoted will demonstrate an ability to verbally describe reasons why they should be promoted, e.g.:<br>- Previous experience<br>- Background<br>- Certifications (if applicable)<br>- Skill areas<br>- Why they should receive hiring preference | The employee will demonstrate an ability to verbally identify skills they possess that could be used in a higher skilled position. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, employees will verbally identify at least 5 reasons why they should be promoted. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8.0 SKILL DOMAIN: KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD EMPLOYEE SKILLS/VOCABULARY | | | |
| 8.1 The employee will demonstrate a knowledge of the skills and vocabulary associated with a "good employee" in his/her position. Employees should demonstrate familiarity with skills associated with "good employees," e.g.:<br>- Cooperative<br>- Punctual<br>- Flexible<br>- Thorough<br>- Dependable<br>- Tidy<br>- Eager<br>- Efficient<br>- Familiar with<br>- Patient<br>- Organized<br>- Willing to<br>- Disciplined | The employee will verbally define his/her good employee skills. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employees will verbally define a minimum of 5 "good employee" skills that they possess. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8.0 SKILL DOMAIN: KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD EMPLOYEE SKILLS/VOCABULARY (continued) | | | |
| 8.2 The employee will demonstrate familiarity with such general vocabulary as:<br><br>- Agreement<br>- Applicant<br>- Appropriate<br>- Attention<br>- Available<br>- Column<br>- Convenient<br>- Description<br>- Dependent<br>- Opportunity<br>- Workload<br>- Complaint | The employee will correctly define general vocabulary. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employee will verbally define a minimum of 5 words from the general vocabulary list. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8.0 SKILL DOMAIN: KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD EMPLOYEE SKILLS/VOCABULARY (continued) | | | |
| 8.2 The employee will demonstrate familiarity with such general vocabulary as:<br><br>- Agreement<br>- Applicant<br>- Appropriate<br>- Attention<br>- Available<br>- Column<br>- Convenient<br>- Description<br>- Dependent<br>- Opportunity<br>- Workload<br>- Complaint | The employee will correctly define general vocabulary. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employee will verbally define a minimum of 5 words from the general vocabulary list. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9.0 SKILL DOMAIN: DISCUSSING WORK PERFORMANCE | | | |
| 9.1 The employee will demonstrate an ability to discuss how he/she is performing at work. For example, employees will be able to answer questions similar to the following:<br><br>Q: Did you finish your work?<br><br>A: Yes, I <u>finished</u> the work.<br><br>Q. Did you complete the circuit?<br><br>A. Yes, I <u>completed</u> the circuit. | The employee will respond correctly to questions regarding his/her work performance. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom role playing exercises, the employee will verbally respond to four role playing situations. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10.0 SKILL DOMAIN: SAFETY REGULATIONS/ACCIDENTS | | | |
| 10.1 The employee will demonstrate a knowledge of general company occupational and safety act laws and standards at his/her workplace. | The employee will have a knowledge of company safety laws and standards. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employee will demonstrate and feel that he/she understands safety regulations. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation<br>Employee rating |
| 10.2 The employee will demonstrate the ability to know how to respond to different types of accidents (e.g., chemical burns, etc.) typical of employees working in his/her job. | The employee will successfully demonstrate a knowledge of how to respond to worksite accidents. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom role playing situations, the employee will successfully react to three or more worksite accident situations. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation |
| 10.3 The employee will have the knowledge to direct concerns/questions to appropriate persons, e.g., company nurse, safety supervisor. | The employee will be able to route safety concerns/questions to designated company employees. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employee will verbally identify appropriate contact persons to respond to safety questions. | Classroom participation<br>Instructor observation<br>Employee rating |
| 10.4 The employee will know how to complete written safety accident reports accurately and provide verbal accounts of accidents. | The employee will accurately complete written accident reports and verbally describe accidents. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion, the employee will complete sample written safety accident reports accurately. | Written assessment |

| COMPETENCY | INDICATOR | BENCHMARK | MEANS OF MEASUREMENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10.0 SKILL DOMAIN: SAFETY REGULATIONS/ACCIDENTS (continued) | | | |
| 10.5 The employee will demonstrate an ability to read and understand safety signs, e.g.:<br>- Wear safe clothes<br>- Do not smoke<br>- Keep fire exit door shut<br>- Keep out<br>- Bend your knees before you lift | The employee will accurately read safety signs. | Given an opportunity to participate in classroom discussion of written safety signs, the employee will verbally identify safety signs identified by the instructor. | Written assessment |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 1.0 HEALTH BENEFIT INSURANCE/SICK LEAVE PRACTICES | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 The employee's knowledge of health benefit insurance/sick leave practices is... | | | | | | |
| 1.2 The employee's knowledge of correct procedures to report absences and sick leave is... | | | | | | |
| 1.3 The employee's ability to complete health insurance forms is... | | | | | | |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 2.0 COMPANY WORK PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 The employee's knowledge of company work performance expectations is... | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 3.0 KNOWLEDGE OF AND ACCESS TO COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 The employee's knowledge of ESL/ABE classes is... | | | | | | |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 4.0 TEST TAKING | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1 The employee's anxiety towards taking tests is... | | | | | | |
| 4.2 The employee's ability to successfully pass tests is... | | | | | | |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 5.0 CLARIFY INSTRUCTIONS/COMMUNICATION | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1 The employee's ability to paraphrase supervisor directions is... | | | | | | |
| 5.2 The employee's ability to communicate verbally with coworkers, supervisors, and customers is... | | | | | | |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| | | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.0 | TEST TAKING<br>HEALTH BENEFIT INSURANCE/SILK LEAVE PRACTICES | | | | | | |
| | 4.1 The employee's anxiety towards taking tests is... | | | | | | |
| | 4.2 The employee's ability to successfully pass tests is... | | | | | | |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 6.0 GENERAL WORKPLACE TERMINOLOGY | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.1 The employee's knowledge of general workplace terminology is... | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
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| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
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| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 7.0 UPGRADE TERMINOLOGY | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.1 The employee's ability to verbally describe reasons why he/she should be promoted is... | | | | | | |

EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 8.0 KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD EMPLOYEE SKILLS/VOCABULARY | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8.1 The employee's knowledge of the skills and vocabulary associated with a "good employee" is... | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| 8.2 The employee's knowledge of general vocabulary skills is... | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |
| Specify: _____ | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | |

EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 9.0 DISCUSSING WORK PERFORMANCE | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9.1 The employee's ability to discuss his/her work performance is... | | | | | | |

## EMPLOYER/SUPERVISOR WPL FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

| 10.0 SAFETY REGULATIONS/ACCIDENTS | Same | Better | Worse | Too Soon To Tell | Not Applicable | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10.1 The employee's knowledge of general company occupational and safety act laws is... | | | | | | |
| 10.2 The employee's knowledge of how to respond to different types of on-site accidents/safety hazards is... | | | | | | |
| 10.3 The employee's knowledge of where to direct safety questions is... | | | | | | |
| 10.4 The employee's ability to complete written safety accidents and provide verbal accident reports is... | | | | | | |
| 10.5 The employee's ability to read safety signs is... | | | | | | |

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PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

# LEARN AND RELATE GRAMMAR SKILLS WITH WORK SITUATIONS

## ASKING QUESTIONS WITH WHERE

1. The employee will learn how to ask questions with WHERE. E.g., "Where do I put the timesheet?...Where are the accident reports?...Where is the supervisor's office?"

## ASKING QUESTIONS WITH HOW MANY

2. The employee will learn how to ask questions with HOW MANY. E.g., "How many rooms do I need to clean?...How many boxes do I need to unpack?"

## ASKING QUESTIONS WITH WHEN AND WHAT TIME

3. The employee will learn how to ask questions with WHEN and WHAT TIME. E.g., When does the shift start?...What time do I change the tape?

## ASKING QUESTIONS WITH YES/NO

4. The employee will learn how to ask yes/no questions. E.g., "Do I need to write down this order...Do you?...Do we?...Do they?...Does he?...Does she?...Does it?"

## ASKING QUESTIONS USING WOULD YOU LIKE

5A. The employee will learn how to practice using WOULD LIKE in sentences. E.g., "Would you like more help reading the drawing?"

RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS USING WOULD YOU LIKE

5B. The employee will learn how to practice using positive and negative responses to questions. E.g., "Do you want to go to the meeting?" and responding with "Thank you; I would like to go to the meeting...No thank you; I would not like to go to the meeting."

THE SIMPLE PAST USING WHY

6. The employee will learn how to give short answers to questions using WHY. E.g., "Why did you stop working?...Because I had to ask my supervisor a question."

FREQUENCY ADVERBS

7. The employee will learn the meaning of frequency adverbs: ALWAYS, USUALLY, OFTEN, SOMETIMES, SELDOM, RARELY, NEVER. The employee will also know how to follow directions which include frequency adverbs. E.g., "Sometimes you should review the safety manual to learn new safety procedures."

USE OF PLURALS

8. The employee will learn how to form plurals of commonly used work-related nouns. E.g.,

| Singular | Plural |
|---|---|
| One blueprint | Two blueprints |
| One circuit board | Three circuit boards |
| One manual | Four manuals |

USE OF THE WORDS SOME AND ANY

9. The employee will learn how to use the words SOME and ANY in questions. E.g., "Do you have some time to move the cartons?"

THERE IS AND THERE ARE, YES/NO QUESTIONS

10. The employee will learn how to use THERE IS and THERE ARE when asking or responding to sentences. E.g., "Are there any invoices in the file cabinet?...Yes, there are...No, there aren't."..."Is there an accident report form on the desk?...No, there isn't...Yes there is."

WORDS USED FOR PAST TIME AND FUTURE TIME

11. The employee will learn how to form sentences using the words YESTERDAY, LAST, TOMORROW, NEXT. E.g., "I will change to the second shift tomorrow...I finished the circuit board ten minutes ago...I'm going to be done with my work in fifteen minutes."

USE OF THE WORDS SHOULD/SHOULDN'T

12. The employee will learn the meaning of the words SHOULD and SHOULDN'T and will use sentences with the words should and shouldn't. E.g., "I should work faster...I should ask questions if I don't understand...I shouldn't leave the assembly line except at break time...I shouldn't forget to mop the floor."

USE OF FIRST AND THEN, ETC.

13. The employee will learn how to follow directions using the words FIRST and THEN. E.g., "First make the beds, then wash the floor."

USE OF WHEN, AFTER, BEFORE, AND WHILE

14. The employee will learn how to follow directions using the words WHEN, AFTER, BEFORE, and WHILE. E.g., "While you are cleaning the room, write down any items you need to order...When you finish work, let me know...After you deliver the food, return to the kitchen...Before you start work, hand in your timesheet."

USE OF SAME AS, SIMILAR TO, AND DIFFERENT FROM

15. The employee will learn when to use the words SAME AS, SIMILAR TO, and DIFFERENT FROM in sentences. The employee will know how to follow directions using these words. E.g., "The wires should be connected the same as the drawing...Drawing A is similar to Drawing B. Be careful not to confuse the drawings...The new plans are different. Look at the changes."

USE OF IMPERATIVE SENTENCES

16. The employee will learn how to receive and make commands. E.g., "Open the manual. Look at page 2...Be quiet. Don't interrupt the foreman."

HOW TO RECEIVE AND GIVE DIRECTIONS

17. The employee will learn how to receive and give directions. E.g., "Could you tell me how to get to the supply room?...Yes, walk down the hall and take the first left."

EXPRESSING ABILITY, USE OF CAN/CAN'T

18. The employee will learn how to use the words CAN and CAN'T to express their ability. E.g., "Can you read the blueprint by yourself? Yes, I can...No, I can't help. I need help...Can you lift the box? Yes, I can...No, I can't, it is too heavy."

EXHIBIT B

DISSEMINATION

# TOPICS

A Publication of the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council — Winter 1989


## PIC PROGRAMS REFLECT CHANGES IN NATION'S LABOR FORCE

Business analysts and demographers have in the past few years presented some startling news to American businesses — many of whom are already reeling from labor shortages.

"New jobs created between now and the year 2000 will require workers to have more education and skills than ever before. At the same time, the education and skills levels of the pool of new workers are alarmingly low," says Laurie McCutcheon, president of McCutcheon Demographic Research in Seattle.

WHERE THE JOBS ARE IS WHERE THE SKILLS AREN'T
FOR AMERICAN BUSINESS A NEW WORLD OF WORKERS
BusinessWeek
HUMAN CAPITAL
The Decline of America's Work Force

*National headlines chronicle the changes in America's work force*

Accordingly, the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council has refocused many of its training programs to meet the needs of the evolving marketplace.

"We've examined the same problems that American businesses are facing," says PIC Executive Director Al Starr. "Who will be entering the labor force in the next 20 years, and what jobs will be available to them? We continue to develop special work-training programs that target women, minorities, immigrants and youth — who will comprise over 80 percent of the new work force in the years ahead," he explains.

Starr says that the PIC is also refocusing its efforts with a "three-pronged approach": (1) Redirect the skills of entry level workers so that they are prepared to meet the demands of their jobs; (2) retrain or refocus the skills of workers who have been laid off; and (3) assist workers who are in danger of losing their jobs due to inadequate skills.

McCutcheon applauds the efforts of the PIC, and of businesses who have already become more active and innovative in training and retaining their workers.

"The majority of workers who will be on the job in the year 2000 are on the job today," McCutcheon says. "It will become increasingly difficult for businesses to recruit new workers to meet their labor needs. In many cases, their only option will be to retain existing workers and upgrade their skills through on-the-job training."

*(Continued on back page)*

*Staff and graduates of the Seattle Westin Hotel's WLP program*

### Workplace Literacy Project Improves Employees' English Skills

**As local businesses employ more immigrants and undereducated Americans, problems with language barriers and inadequate literacy skills are increasingly common.**

The Seattle-King County Private Industry Council has developed the Workplace

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Workforce Program Assists Dislocated Workers

For employees who have spent their entire working lives with one company, plant closures and mass layoffs can be financially and emotionally devastating. But thanks to Workforce, a new program sponsored by the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council, dislocated workers are entitled to personalized assistance in finding new jobs.

Workforce offers dislocated workers free employment counseling, remedial education, vocational training, on-the-job-training and job search workshops. The services are also available to the long-term unemployed, formerly self-employed workers, and others.

"Our goal is to get people right back to work, and that begins with assessment and re-training," says PIC Deputy Director Rose Lincoln. "We begin by determining their skills, education, background, and experience — anything that gives them employment skills.

"We determine what type of work they are interested in, and the skills they will need. Then, if additional skills are needed, we enroll them in a program at a local public school, such as the Renton or Lake Washington Vocational Technical Institutes. Workforce pays for their books, materials, and tuition."

There is no charge for any of the services or support, and Workforce assists dislocated workers until they are working, Lincoln adds.

Workforce is located at South Seattle Community College Duwamish branch, and is operated through a cooperative agreement between the PIC and the Puget Sound Region Employment Security Department. The program is funded through the Department of Labor, under the Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance Act.

According to Roger Haydon, Workforce manager, the program helps both displaced workers and ailing companies. "In some cases, dislocated workers come to Workforce for help. At other times, a company that is planning a closure or layoffs will contact us for assistance, or we learn of an impending closure and contact them to see how we can help."

*Workforce counselor Gwen Peete meets with client Ted Sullivan, who has 20 years' experience in the banking industry.*

Haydon explains how Workforce assisted a company that will close at the end of this year: "They contacted us, and we arranged for a one-day job-search workshop for their employees, and enrolled in our program those who needed training. We've also given stress management workshops and financial planning workshops for employees at companies with imminent closures or layoffs."

Dislocated workers seeking a job, or companies anticipating plant closures or layoffs may call Workforce for information and assistance, at 764-4040. ■

## Tim Powell

*Tim Powell*

Tim Powell, chairman of the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council's board of directors, is committed to solving problems.

As vice president and manager of Seafirst's Southcenter branch and the company's former director of human resources and personnel, Powell knows that PIC's approach to employment works.

"I like to fix problems at the front end. You're either going to 'pay now or pay later,' so it's rewarding for me to be involved with the Private Industry Council, which is devoted to fixing problems now."

Powell began his two-year term as PIC chairman in January of 1989, after serving on the board for three years. Powell says his involvement with PIC is very rewarding.

"I have a personal interest in job training. Working with the PIC is a good complement to my corporate job; it also gives me a different perspective on the job market. It's always an eye-opener."

Time permitting, Powell plans to continue his involvement with the PIC after his term as chairman is over. "I've served on many different boards, and this one is run exceptionally well. Our time and talents are well utilized," he explains.

Powell encourages other business people to become involved with the PIC. "We're always on the lookout for strong board members from the private sector. The Seattle-King County PIC represents the leading edge of a very important national program. It's an exciting organization to be involved with." ■

# Local PIC Programs Win National Awards

*Judi Larson (center), Young Family Independence Program coordinator, accepts the NAB's "1989 Youth Program of the Year" award from NAB Chairman of the Board John B. Carter and Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole.*

Three work-training programs sponsored by the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council have received prestigious national awards within the past year.

**The Young Family Independence Program** was named 1989 Youth Program of the Year by the National Alliance of Business. The program, funded by the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council in cooperation with the King County Work Training Program, demonstrated that with sufficient support, teenaged parents can break the cycle of poverty, become personally and economically self-sufficient and create healthy families. The program provides alternative school settings with child care, instruction on pre- and post-natal health care, peer support groups, life skills and parenting education, and vocational training and competency development. The comprehensive program enrolled more than 130 teenaged mothers and fathers in 1988, and had a 90 percent success rate.

**The Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Employment for Women (ANEW) Program** also earned high honors from the National Alliance of Business in 1988, when it was selected Program of the Year. ANEW is a five-month training program targeted to low-income women — often single mothers and welfare recipients — who want to enter trades and other blue collar professions. Classroom instruction includes hands-on experience with tools and equipment, trade related math, activities to build self-confidence, and job search training. Eighty percent of ANEW's 1988 graduates found blue collar jobs or apprenticeships which paid an average of $8.42 per hour.

Also in 1988, the **MetroCenter YMCA Youth Employment Program** received the National Association of Counties' Job Training Partnership Act Award for Excellence. The program helps disadvantaged youth overcome barriers to employment and become successful members of the work force by making available positions that allow them a chance to earn money while learning basic skills. ■

## Workplace Literacy

*(Continued from Page 1)*

Literacy Project (WLP) to alleviate these problems for employers, by teaching employees the basic communications skills needed to perform their jobs satisfactorily.

Working with the Employment Opportunity Center and the Refugee Federation, the PIC has developed on-site literacy programs, including English as a Second Language, for companies such as Eldec, Interpoint, Seattle Westin Hotel, Zealandia and King County Blue Shield. Funding for WLP comes from a federal grant administered through the Department of Education.

*Eldec's Gary Croft (middle) and John Vicklund (right) pay a visit to the class of WLP instructor Kent Young (left).*

According to Vicki Asakura, PIC's project director for the Workplace Literacy Project, each class is tailored to the company's needs and the skill levels of its employees. "The classes range from basic literacy needs such as reading and writing, to more specific job-related skills like blueprint reading. In some cases, our instructors help employees understand a company's benefits, policies and procedures."

Much of the success of the program stems from the fact that employees receive their training at the job site during normal business hours, says Asakura. "A program which requires employees to travel to a different location for the class,

*(Continued on back page)*

## Workplace Literacy

(Continued from page 3)

or to attend class in their off-hours, is tough on family schedules — and transportation can be a problem. This way, the literacy classes work right into their schedules."

"The program is working for us," says John Vicklund, vice president of human relations at Eldec, a Lynnwood electronics designer and manufacturer. Like most participating companies, Eldec pays its employees for half their time spent in class.

"A common dilemma with non-American born employees is that despite having excellent on-the-job skills, they may be less likely to advance or even retain their jobs because of their limited English skills," explains Vicklund. "This naturally creates frustration among the employees. Our literacy program is helping to correct that situation."

The Seattle Westin Hotel has enrolled 40 employees in on-site literacy programs. According to Laurie Luongo, the Westin's director of human relations, WLP has improved employee morale, retention and recruitment.

"Of the 40 employees who have taken the class, 38 are still employed here -- and that's a big improvement," says Luongo. "Two of the 40 have been promoted, and the employees who have taken our class have encouraged friends to apply here. New employees who have heard about the classes from their co-workers frequently ask us, 'When is the next English class going to be offered?'"

Companies who would like to learn more about WLP are encouraged to call Vicki Asakura at the PIC, at 684-7390. ■

## Programs Reflect Changes

(Continued from page 1)

"And, since businesses will need to draw increasingly from the pool of undereducated or immigrant workers, literacy and English language classes will become more widespread."

"One of the PIC's greatest strengths has always been its ability to tailor programs to the current economy and labor market," says Al Starr. "We can assist both job-seekers and businesses with the challenges that lie ahead." ■

## What is the PIC?

The Seattle-King County Private Industry Council links business, government, education, labor and community groups in partnerships to provide well-trained workers for businesses in King County.

The PIC provides recruitment and screening services, on-the-job training and education, and customized training. In short, the PIC helps businesses find the right person for the job.

### The PIC Can Help Your Business

Whether your business needs assistance with recruitment, screening, training, or fulfilling affirmative action goals, the PIC can help.

Discover how the PIC can help your business save time and money. Call Ric Farinas at 684-7390.

*Chairman, Joint Executive Board:*
Mayor Charles Royer

*Chairman, Board of Directors:*
Tim Powell
Seafirst Corporation

*Executive Director:*
Alfred L. Starr

The PIC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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Peter Liddell / Seattle Times

**Hau Minh Diep, left, who is Chinese, practices his English on In Ku Kang, a recent arrival from Korea.**

# English at work

## Westin Hotel joins pilot program to help employees communicate

**by Svein Gilje**
Times business reporter

Hau Minh Diep, who is Chinese, turned to In Ku Kang, a native Korean, and said, "Have a nice day."

It's a phrase that Diep has adopted in the 10 years since he came here as a refugee from Vietnam. But his overall mastery of the English language has not kept pace with his usage of that American greeting phrase.

Typically, Diep, Kang and other immigrants have sought entry-level jobs which required a minimum knowledge of English. At best, they have been getting by. Others have lost their jobs after a few months for lack of sufficient language skills and misunderstandings with their co-workers.

But a new workplace-language program funded by a federal grant may change that. Started last fall as a pilot program for Westin Hotel employees, the language classes may help remove major roadblocks for employment and promotions for immigrants, said Darrell Mihara, executive director of the Employment Opportunity Center, a private nonprofit organization working with primarily low-income and disadvantaged immigrants in finding jobs.

**Estrella Chan**

About 10 Westin employees, Diep and Kang included, meet twice weekly for two-hour sessions at the Westin with teacher Estrella Chan. Chan also conducts an early-morning class for three employees on different work shifts.

The grant also covers similar classes at Zealandia Inc., a Redmond manufacturing firm which has 90 employees, most of them refugees. The Refugee Federation Service Center holds classes for 20 employees three hours a day, five days a week. The grant provides for ongoing classes for a full year.

"We also provide consultation about company policy and give an introductory orientation about the American society," said Ngy Hul, associate director of the center.

The Westin and Zealandia donate time and space for the 10-week classes. The Westin pays wages for the first hour of the classes, while employees do the second hour on their own time. Evenutally 150 people may take the classes this year at the two work places.

At the Westin, classes also include explanations of medical and other employee benefits. Chan provides an interpreter for some of the Korean employees

Please see **WESTIN** on B 3,9

# Report failed t

**Washington Post**

WASHINGTON – T
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# Experts Boeing

**by Byron Acohido**
Times aerospace repor

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SECTION C
Friday
January 20, 1989
Seattle Post-Intelligencer
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# Westin Hotel has no room at the inn for illiteracy

**Carol Smith Monkman**

The Bush era is officially under way as of today, and now that it's begun, we can expect more visibility for one of Barbara Bush's chief national concerns — literacy. Or to be more specific — illiteracy. Nationally, between 20 percent and 33 percent of all Americans are thought to be functionally illiterate, meaning they lack the basic reading, writing and mathematical skills to function in the workplace. The problem is expected to get worse before it gets better, and many employers have identified literacy as one of the most pressing workplace issues of the 1990s.

Here in Seattle, the Westin Hotel has decided to stop wringing its hands over the problem and do something about it. The Westin is the first company in the state and among the first in the country to mount a formal literacy program for its non-English-speaking employees. Of all the basic workplace skills, the most basic is English. For more than 100,000 recent immigrants in King County, not speaking English is a barrier to getting employment. Once on the job, problems with English can hinder advancement.

The Westin, like many companies in the hospitality industry, employs many people for whom English is a second language. These employees are typically concentrated in jobs such as housekeeping, laundry and dishwashing where contact with guests is minimal. Even so, English skills are important to these workers for communicating with supervisors and fellow employees.

So far the Westin has recruited 11 non-English-speaking employees to take its on-site language classes, which meet for two hours twice a week. The hotel pays their wages for the first hour while the employees volunteer their time for the second hour. The response has been enthusiastic, said Dior Hill, hotel spokeswoman. When the two-month pilot stage is over, the hotel plans to offer advanced courses for employees who want to polish up their pronunciation and grammar.

**OTHER COMPANIES** are watching with interest. The Employment Opportunities Center, a non-profit job-skills organization that runs the classes for the Westin, has already received inquiries from a number of large employers, said Executive Director Darrell Mihara. The Westin project is the first workplace literacy program to be funded in part through the Seattle Private Industry Council (PIC), which recently received a $171,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education to develop employer-based literacy programs. The grant pays for 70 percent of the program costs, with the private sector kicking in the other 30 percent. The PIC plans to set up similar programs with other interested employers.

The grant, one of 37 awarded last year, is part of the Education Department's $9.7 million strategy to combat escalating workplace illiteracy.

Literacy issues don't just center on people for whom English is a second language, either. According to the Center for Public Resources Survey of Basic Skills in the U.S. Workforce, 30 percent of the companies that responded reported that their secretaries had difficulty reading at the level required by their jobs. Half the companies reported that managers and supervisors weren't able to write paragraphs free of grammatical errors, and 65 percent reported that such deficiencies were standing in the way of promotions for employees.

**IN ANOTHER** study, the Department of Education found that only 27 percent of young adults could interpret long newspaper stories. What's more, says Adrienne Whitener, Business and Literacy Project coordinator for the Washington Coalition for Adult Literacy, most of the written material in the business world requires reading skills between the ninth- and 12th-grade levels, yet 15 percent of the workforce reads below those levels.

And the problem is expected to get worse. Statistics indicate that 80 percent of the new entrants to the workforce in the next decade will be minorities and immigrants and that half of them will be women. The proportion of immigrants entering the workplace is triple the proportion of immigrants already on the job.

This trend, coupled with the increasing complexity of the skills required for even entry-level positions, is expected to exacerbate the problems of illiteracy in the workplace. If more companies start attacking the problem now, however, perhaps we can forestall a productivity crisis of grand proportions.

■ Carol Smith Monkman is a P-I staff columnist. Her column appears Mondays and Fridays.

# Literacy grant program funds English lessons for workers

By PATRICIA BOND

SEATTLE (UPI) — In Kyu Kang left Korea armed with the polished skills of a furniture craftsman and a news pressman. In America, he found a job as a kitchen worker on the graveyard shift.

Kang, who has worked for five years as a hotel custodian to feed his family, wants more for his wife and two children, but the language barrier makes moving up impossible.

"Life here is hard," he says.

Congress has responded to the problem by offering a pilot Workplace Literacy Program to help industry tap the potential of such workers.

The problem spreads beyond non-English speakers, however, to a large number of illiterate workers in service industries who cannot advance beyond the entry level because of learning difficulties.

"We want to reach the lowest of the low. Businesses have always assisted in putting money into management training, but not much money usually reaches the front line service workers," said Sarah Newcomb, a spokesman with the Department of Education, which awards the literacy grants.

The program allows workers to learn to read and write English at the work site on company time. The employer pays the worker for two of the four hours a week they are in class.

At an English class in Seattle's Westin Hotel, one of a number of businesses around the country that participates in the program, 11 students learn phrases to help them in their work, as well as information about employee benefits and rights.

Communication between the immigrants from Burma, Korea and El Salvador is strained, but they have learned enough of a common language to harass each other in the spirit of camaraderie.

The conversation begins to resemble an Abbott and Costello routine as the students act out an accident scene.

In Kyu: "Did you see the accident?"

Lu Chen: "Yes. I did."

In Kyu: "Will you be my witness?"

Lu Chen: "Yes, I hurt my eye."

In Kyu: "No, I hurt my eye."

Lu Chen: "You hurt your eye, too? How that happen?"

Laughter erupts and the two grin modestly, then recite the dialogue correctly.

In Kyu Kang has the most advanced English skills, but still finds moving ahead difficult.

Besides his custodial job, he is struggling to keep a landscape business afloat. That goal is complicated by misunderstandings with clients and an inability to contact new customers.

Communication problems add to the stresses because the refugees cannot get the information they need the way the majority of Americans can, simply by asking.

Mr. Lee, another student in the class, said his car insurance rates have skyrocketed because of an accident that was not his fault. He feels his insurer paid off the other motorist to avoid dealing with the communication impasse.

The students bring up similar problems and work through to solutions in halting English, exchanging precious information.

A discussion of workman's compensation brought surprised looks from students who discovered they would receive a partial salary while recovering from a work-related injury.

In Seattle, where a labor shortage motivates businesses to hire workers lacking basic English skills, the program is quickly becoming popular.

Vicki Asakura, director of the Seattle-King County Private Industry Council, which won a literacy grant, said the program began with the Westin Hotel and is spreading.

"The supervisors have been very pleased with the success of the program," she said, because it opens up communication between co-workers.

Seventy percent of the cost of the program is paid by the government, with individuals and employers picking up the remainder. The grants are awarded to partnerships between a business, industry or private industry council and a school or community organization.

The partnership must be between business and the community, Newcomb said.

Congress appropriated $9.5 million in 1988 and slightly increased the sum to $11.9 million in 1989. The Bush administration has not yet requested funds for 1990, Newcomb said.

The money is going to a few dozen partnerships across the country, about half to English as a second language programs, Newcomb said. Other funds go to businesses that need to upgrade employee literacy skills.

The basic curriculum is modified for the employers' needs. Cultural misunderstandings that keep workers back are corrected.

"In one situation we have here, many workers were taught in their native countries that being quiet and soft-spoken is valued and will help them advance. In this country, being humble and not advertising your skill will not get you promoted," Asakura said.

Laurie Luongo, director of human resources at the Westin Hotel, said the hotel plans to encourage continued learning with volunteer tutors when the 10-week class is completed.

"The progress is pretty incredible," Luongo said. "We had 11 employees who were basically non-English speaking."

She said they were hired for very low-skilled positions, but cannot move up because of the language barrier.

"They are very patient and the jobs were repetitive and routine. Training was more show and tell and through the buddy system," she said. More complex jobs require communications skills.

"They are generally well-educated in their own countries, with great potential. We want to hold them and promote them within the hotel," she said. "We're using this as a recruiting tool."